[Translation]

Development of Reservoirs

4894. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Madhya Pradesh has sent any scheme to the Union Government for the development of reservoirs through the Fisheries Department; and

(b) if so, the time by which approval is likely to be accorded?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) The Government of Madhya Pradesh have sent a proposal in November, 1996 for the development of seven reservoirs at a cost of Rs. 130.36 lakhs. However, at present there is no Central Sector/Centrally Sponsored Scheme for development of reservoirs under implementation. The earlier scheme for development of reservoir fisheries was transferred to the State in 1992-93.

[English]

Milk Production

4895. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING be pleased to state:

(a) the targets fixed for milk production by the year 2000 A.D.

(b) the quantity of cattle feed being produced at present in the country; and

(c) the likely requirement of cattle feed by 2000 A.D. and the steps taken to achieve the target?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) No targets of milk production have been fixed for 2000 A.D. However, as per present growth rate, the milk production is likely to reach to the level of about 82.5 million tonnes by the end of 2000-2001.

(b) and (c) As per the estimates made by the Policy Advisory Group on Integrated Grazing Policy of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, the availability of concentrates/ feed for livestock and poultry is above 41.98 million tonnes and requirement in 2000 A.D. would be 88.03 million tonnes.

To meet the requirement of cattle feed, various steps have been taken such as encouraging the increased production of grain and oil seeds, allocation/reservation of molasses, reduction of excise duty on feed ingredients etc.

[Translation]

Agitation by Farmers on Support Price of Foodgrains

4896. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI :

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of farmer's associations of the country have taken a decision to launch agitation against the support price of foodgrains announced by the Government;

(b) if so, the names of such farmer's associations;

(c) the demands of the farmers; and

(d) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (d) The Bharatiya Kisan Union and a few other farmers organisations launched an agitation demanding Minimum Support Price of Rs. 550/- per quintal for wheat. Union Agriculture and Food Minister met Chief Ministers of Punjab and Haryana in Chandigarh on 26.4.97. Any further increase in bonus of Rs. 60/- per quintal already announced by the Government was ruled out during the discussions. The Bharatiya Kisan Union and other organisations are reported to have withdrawn their agitation.

[English]

Central Public Sector Undertakings

4897. SHRI SURESH PRABHU : Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken any major initiative in formulating a clear-cut policy on Public Sector undertakings during 1996-97;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of non-plan support extended by the Government to the PSUs for the last five years merely to project employment, sector-wise and year-wise;

(d) the recommendations of Experts Group in this regard and agenda of action finalised for 1997-98 and implications thereof; and

(e) the details of proposals for expansion of capacity/ modernisation/diversification, etc. pending clearance for over one year and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) The Government policies on PSUs are detailed in the Common Minimum Programme (CMP) and the Approach Paper to the Ninth Five Year Plan. In pursuance of the CMP of the Government, a Public Sector Disinvestment Commission was constituted in August, 1996 initially for a period of 3 years.

(c) The non-plan support is not extended to the PSUs merely to protect employment.

(d) The Planning Commission had set up a Working Group on Management of Public Sector Enterprises. Its Report will be considered for the Ninth Plan.

(e) No proposal for expansion of capacity/ modernisation/diversification etc. of any Central Public Sector Undertaking is pending clearance in the Planning Commission for over one year.

Performance of Research Institutes

4898. SHRI RAJABHAU THAKARE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the most outstanding research contribution of National Institutes on various crops during the last five years, crop-wise and Institute-wise;

(b) whether the Government have set up an Experts Committee to evaluate the performance of the National Research Institutes;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of steps taken during 1996-97 and proposed to be taken during 1997-98 to upgrade, diversity and modernise higher education in the wake of globalisation?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) Most outstanding research contributions of National Institutes on various crops during the last five years include aspects of collection, conservation and evaluation of indigenous and exotic germplasm; development of improved varieties/hybrid including those with resistance/tolerance of biotic/abiotic stresses and value-added crop varieties for export in general. Biotechnology-led development in crop improvement (Indian Agricultural Research Institute) development of region-specific IPM modules for various pest-intensive crops (National Centre for Integrated Pest Management. IARI, Central Institute for Cotton Research), and development of alternative technologies (like use to True Potato Seed in raising potato crop), Central Potato Research Institute and biopesticides (IARI, Central Tobacco Research Institute) on varietal development front some salient examples are: Improved varieties of Basmati rice (IARI), Hybrid rice (Dte of Rice Research). The area coverage under rice is around 50,000 ha. Replacement of susceptible varieties to wheat rust like HD 2329 and HD 2385 by UP 2338 in the North West Plan Zone and Sonalika by Sonali (IARI, Dte of Wheat Research); short duration hybrids in pigeonpea for Tamil Nadu and Punjab; short duration improved varieties of soybean almost doubling its area in last five years; improved hybrids in sunflower, castor and Gobhi sarson; powdery mildew and yellow mosaic virus resistant short duration varieties of blackgram and greengram etc. Accelerated efforts on breeder seed production by various institutes has led to effective expansion of improved varieties considerably.

(b) and (c) Quinquennial Review Teams for audit of research progress have been formed in general for different institutes, which is a routine procedure for every five-year period.

(d) Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi which deals with crops also imparts higher education. Modernization of Library, Development of Agricultural Information System, and establishment/strengthening of Centres of Excellence and Schools of thoughts in priority areas are undertaken/contemplated.

[Translation]

Irregularities in Payment of Subsidy

4899. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the irregularities being committed in the subsidy being provided to farmers in the agriculture sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (c) No irregularities in the provision of subsidies to farmers have been brought to the notice of the Government in respect of Central/Cetrally Sponsored Schemes